

The Onychophora of the Malay Peninsula

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A series of three females and a male of *Eoperipatus* was taken by collectors of the Raffles Museum in jungle on the slopes of Gunong Pulai, Johore, at an altitude of about 500 ft. on 28th October, 1930.

The apparently contradictory characters exhibited led me to make a careful examination of the remaining material in the Raffles Museum. (2).

This consists of:—

1. A large female taken in Johore in 1905 by Mr. C. Boden Kloss, and attributed by Dr. Dakin to *E. horsti* Evans.
2. A female taken on Kedah Peak in 1915 by Dr. R. Hanitsch, which Dr. Dakin considers as belonging to *E. weldoni* Evans.
3. A female without data, but probably of local provenance.

The descriptions given by Evans (1) of the two local species are somewhat difficult to follow, as they are combined, but examination of the available material shows the results stated below.

(a) On the arrangement of the legs specimens 1, 2 & 3. belong to *E. horsti*. The Gunong Pulai material would be divisible into two species.

(b) Using the tubercles and grooves of the skin as a character 1, 2 and 3 fall into line with *E. weldoni*. The Gunong Pulai specimens, all smaller, show the *horsti* pattern.

(c) The other characters on which the two species are divided, such as the appearance of the crural grooves and the presence or absence of sucker-like structures vary considerably in individuals.

The conclusion arrived at is that only one species is represented. The differences in the skin are almost certainly due to age, the grooves being more marked and the papillæ more pointed in the younger individuals.

The apparent difference in interval between the legs of *weldoni* may be due to unequal contraction in the preserving fluid, and the gradation from papillæ to "suckers" at the margin of the crural grooves is probably capable of explanation partly by a difference in these structures due to age, in part by the degree of expansion at the time of death and the action of the preservative.

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It is most unlikely that two species of this primitive genus should have survived side by side.

The name *weldoni* appears to be the correct name for the species, as the first name to be mentioned by Evans.

It is, however, probable that this will prove to be a synonym of *Eoperipatus sumatranaus* (Horst) and that the latter is to be found in the Malay Peninsula and Borneo (4) in addition to Sumatra.

REFERENCES

1. Evans, Quart. Journ. Micros. Sci., 44, No. 126, 1901, pp. 473-538. Pl. 32-37.
2. Kloss, Journ. Malayan Br. Roy. Asiat. Soc., IV, 1926, p. 167.
3. Dover, Journ. F.M.S. Mus., XIII, 1927, p. 265.
4. Gravier and Le Fage, Bull. Mus. Nat. Hist. Nat., 1925, pp. 453-456.